



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center

Quick Facts: Vancomycin-intermediate *Staphylococcus aureus* (VISA) and Vancomycin- resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA)

What is *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Staphylococcus aureus (Staph) is a germ commonly found on the skin and in the nose of many people. When Staph enters the body through a break in the skin it can cause mild infections, such as pimples and boils, or serious infections, such as pneumonia, surgical wound infections, or bloodstream infections. For many years Staph infections have been treated with antibiotics and now Staph bacteria have become resistant to some antibiotics.

What are VISA and VRSA?

VISA and VRSA are Staph that have developed resistance to the antibiotic Vancomycin; therefore, cannot be treated with Vancomycin. While VISA and VRSA infections are rare, they are serious and difficult to treat.

How are VISA and VRSA spread?

VISA and VRSA are spread by close skin contact with an infected person or by contact with an infectious person's wound bandages or drainage.

Who is at risk for VISA and VRSA?

Your risk is higher if you:

- Had a previous infection with Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) (see MRSA Quick Facts).
- Have a history of diabetes
- Have a history of kidney disease
- Have tubes or catheters in your body
- Have recently been a patient in a health care facility

- Have recently used Vancomycin or other antibiotics

How do I know if I have VISA or VRSA?

See your health care provider. Your health care provider may collect a sample from the infected area and send it to a laboratory. Laboratory tests can determine if you have VISA or VRSA infection.

How are VISA and VRSA treated?

Your health care provider will determine which antibiotics would be effective.

How are VISA and VRSA prevented?

- Wash your hands properly and often (see Hand Washing Quick Facts).
- Avoid direct contact with another person's wound, drainage, or bandages.
- Health care providers should follow appropriate infection control measures.
- When someone who is hospitalized and who is infected with VISA or VRSA, strictly follow the hospital's recommended precautions.
- Use antibiotics wisely to prevent resistance (see Antibiotic Use and Antibiotic Resistance Quick Facts).

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

VISA/VRSA in Healthcare

http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/visa_vrsa/visa_vrsa.html

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